

## ANNEX BBB

### EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR AGRICULTURE

#### A. PURPOSE

Natural and man-made disasters often cause significant property damage or severe production losses to farming, ranching and other agricultural operations. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has programs that enable farmers and rural communities to continue their operations and assure continuity of essential functions. This annex describes the types of USDA emergency assistance available and outlines the procedures, policies and responsibilities for implementing these programs. NOTE: All assistance programs are available to all eligible applicants on a continuing basis.

#### B. GENERAL ASSISTANCE

1. Each County is assigned a Cooperative Extension Service (CES) agent who supports all USDA natural disaster missions. Farmers, ranchers and others may obtain information and educational material about how to protect themselves and their property against disaster hazards. CES also provides advice regarding clean up of damaged property, sanitation precautions, insect control, emergency food preparation and recovery and renovation of damaged equipment and property.
2. The Rural Development Service (RDS) assists farmers, ranchers and agriculture operators cover losses resulting from a natural disaster and return the operation to a financially sound position. Where one or more farmers are substantially affected, the USDA RDS State Director may authorize the USDA RD County Supervisor to make emergency loans.
3. When the President declares a major disaster or emergency, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) automatically makes loans available in the declared counties and adjoining counties. These loans are made for the same purposes and at the same interest rates and terms as prescribed for loans authorized by the Farm Service Agency State Director. All loans must be secured and will be made only when private credit is not available to affected individuals.
4. Applicants should contact the Farm Service Agency county office in which the farming operation is located. Farm Service Agency personnel assist applicants in completing the necessary forms.
5. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) can authorize temporary grazing or haying on set-aside Conservation Reserve Program Acreage. Implementation of this program requires approval of the State

FSA State Committee and Deputy Administrator of Farm Programs (DAFP). Eligible farmers make application to the County FSA Committee.

6. The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) can assist in obtaining railroad freight rate reduction to facilitate the movement of feed supplies to areas affected by natural disasters and livestock from affected areas to areas where adequate pasture or forage exists. Interested individuals or groups should contact the AMS in Washington, D.C. for assistance in obtaining rate reductions.
7. Private insurance companies provide all risk insurance for individual farmers to ensure basic income against natural causes of extensive crop losses. All-Risk Crop Insurance can be purchased from private insurance agents nationwide.
8. The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides public agencies with project grants and technical assistance to initiate and carry out long-range programs of resource conservation and development, including projects for flood prevention and rehabilitation of disaster-damaged agricultural land. State and other public agencies having legal authority to plan, install, operate and maintain community projects having public benefits make application at the local NRCS office.
9. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) can provide veterinarians, livestock inspectors, plant pathologists and entomologists to assist in emergency measures to prevent, control and eradicate certain domestic livestock, poultry and plant diseases; to assure the wholesomeness of slaughtering processing plant products; and to control insect pests. Individuals and local governments are eligible for these services; requests can be made at any USDA office.
10. Policies, procedures and methods of debris removal/clearance are determined by FEMA under provision of PL 93-288, as amended, which authorizes the use of federal departments, including USDA, to remove debris and wreckage resulting from a major disaster.
11. Under PL 93-288, as amended, responsibility for distribution of food during a natural disaster lies with the American Red Cross. When needed, food commodities from the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources will be used and warehouses resupplied by USDA. The Secretary of Agriculture may authorize emergency food stamp distribution, when requested by the State Department of Health and Human Resources in order to meet food assistance needs which cannot be met by regular Food Stamp Program procedures.

12. Fire fighting assistance, including grants, can be provided by the President to any state for the putting out of any fire on publicly or privately owned forest or grassland, which threatens such destruction as would constitute a major disaster. The Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, provides technical assistance to FEMA.

#### C. TASK ASSIGNMENTS

1. The Secretary of the USDA can declare a disaster, if the governor requests it; due to crop loss, drought, winter freezes, etc.
2. USDA agencies are responsible for conducting disaster assistance programs outlined in this annex.
3. SEB and CEBs shall insure that USDA personnel who have emergency responsibilities are adequately oriented and trained to function effectively and efficiently in an emergency.
4. The CEB Chairman shall call a meeting of the Board in the event of a natural disaster and invite the county governing body or its appropriate representative, the county emergency services director and other appropriate officials.
5. The SEB Chairman shall call a meeting of the Board in the event of a natural disaster and invite the FEMA representative, the Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR), the state Department of Agriculture representative, the State Emergency Services Director and any other appropriate officials.
6. SEB and CEB shall maintain liaison with appropriate county, state or federal representatives.
7. CEB Chairman will submit Natural Disaster 24-hour Reports and Natural Disaster Damage Assessment Reports in a declared disaster to the SEB Chairman for consultation and editing.

#### D. REFERENCES

1. PL 93-288, as amended, Section 302, "Federal Assistance"
2. USDA Emergency Operations Handbook, 1-15-75 and revisions
3. FEMA Handbook, Disaster Assistance: A Guide to Recovery Programs, June 1989

#### E. ABBREVIATIONS

AMS	Agricultural Marketing Service
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
CCC	Community Credit Corporation
CEB	County Emergency Board – Comprised of representatives from the following USDA agencies: Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Cooperative Extension Service; Farmers Home Administration, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Forest Service may also designate representatives to provide adequate county-level coverage of their program activities.
CES	Cooperative Extension Service
DAFP	Deputy Administrator of Farm Programs, USDA-FSA
FS	Forest Service
FSA	Farm Service Agency
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
RDS	Rural Development Service
SEB	State Emergency Board – Comprised of representatives from Farm Service Agencies, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Cooperative Extension Service, Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Statistical Reporting Service, NRLS
SRS	Statistical Reporting Service
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture